REMARKS

Status of Claims

The Office Action mailed May 31, 2006, has been reviewed and the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office have been considered. Claims 1-9 were pending in the application. No claims have been amended, canceled, or newly added. Claims 1-9 remain pending in the application and are presented for reconsideration.

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Prior Art Rejections

In the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 6-9 were again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 6,718,368 to Ayyadurai (hereafter "Ayyadurai") in view of U.S. patent 6,784,899 to Barrus et al. (hereafter "Barrus"), in further view of U.S. Patent Publication Application No. 2003/0208434 to Posner (hereafter "Posner"), in further view of Microsoft® Outlook 2000 (hereafter "Outlook"). Claim 5 was again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ayyadurai, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,651,217 to Kennedy et al. (hereafter "Kennedy"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 recites that a method of processing an inbound transaction document sent by a trading partner to a user in an electronic commerce system comprises, *inter alia*, receiving the inbound document at an interface for communication with trading partners, automatically determining a set of candidate reply transaction documents associated with the inbound document and the particular trading partner that sent the inbound document without performing a language analysis of a content of the inbound document, receiving a user selection of a reply transaction document from said candidate set, and automatically populating the selected reply document with said transaction data.

In the Response to Arguments beginning on page 9 of the Office Action, the Examiner disagreed with the contention that Ayyadurai does not disclose the feature of "automatically determining a set of candidate reply transaction documents associated with the inbound

document and the particular trading partner that sent the inbound document without performing a language analysis of a content of the inbound document." In particular, the Examiner asserted that:

> the primary Ayyadurai reference teaches "automatically determining a set of candidate reply transactions" (Fig. 3 – (91); col. 6, lines 15-24 *et seq.*). Ayyadurai teaches that based upon the determining parsing tags, the automatic reply generator retrieves from a library of phrases the candidate reply documents that are appropriate.
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> * Page 10 of Office Action

Applicant respectfully disagrees with these asserted teachings of Ayyadurai.

In response to receiving a message (i.e., an e-mail), Ayyadurai discloses that an automatic reply composer 91 uses tags detected from the received message to retrieve partial replies or reply phrases 92 from a library of phrases 90 for each issue and request presented in the message and introductory phrases based on the attitude of the customer (col. 6, lines 15-24). Table 7 in Ayyadurai shows an exemplary two-issue message received from a customer, and Table 10 in Ayyadurai shows a text message composed in response to the message of Table 7 based on the processing steps of Table 8 and the phrase database of Table 9 (col. 6, line 23 – col. 7, line 30.

In contrast to claim 1, Ayyadurai fails to disclose or suggest "automatically determining **a set of candidate reply transaction documents** associated with the inbound document and the particular trading partner that sent the inbound document." Rather, as explained above, Ayyadurai merely discloses determining a single document, i.e., a single text message, which is composed of multiple phrases selected in accordance with the received message. In other words, Ayyadurai does not determine a set of documents in response to a message, but only a single document, as clearly shown by Table 10.

The failure to disclose automatically determining a set of documents is consistent with the admitted failure of Ayyadurai to disclose or suggest "receiving a user selection of a reply transaction document from said candidate set." Since Ayyadurai only determines a single document in response to the received message, there is necessarily no document to select from a set of documents.

Posner discloses that a purchasing agent can create a purchase order by accessing a template manager module 122, which can be configured to maintain many different purchase

order templates having various terms (see ¶ [0050]). Even though Posner discloses that multiple templates may be available, Posner fails to disclose or suggest that the set of the templates are automatically determined and fails to disclose or suggest that the set of templates are determined based on the inbound document and the particular trading partner that sent the inbound document. Rather, Posner merely discloses that a purchasing agent manually reviews a list of templates accessed through the template manager module 122, and that the list of templates is not determined according to an inbound document and the particular trading partner that sent the inbound document.

Like Ayyadurai and Posner, Barrus and Outlook also fail to disclose or suggest "automatically determining a set of candidate reply transaction documents associated with the inbound document and the particular trading partner that sent the inbound document." Barrus is merely cited for the proposition for the automatic delivery of a reply message according to a user's profile without performing a language analysis. Barrus, however, in no way disclose or suggests determining a set of candidate reply transaction documents, nor determining the set according to the type of inbound document or the partner sending the document. Similarly, Outlook is merely cited for the proposition of providing a link to a document in a screen of a mailbox application, but does not disclose or suggest automatically determining a set of candidate reply transaction documents, nor determining the set according to the type of inbound document or the partner sending the document.

Accordingly, each of the cited references fails to disclose or suggest "automatically determining a set of candidate reply transaction documents associated with the inbound document and the particular trading partner that sent the inbound document." Thus, even if combinable, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from the combination of Ayyadurai, Barrus, Outlook, and Posner. Claims 2-4 and 6-7 are patentably distinguishable from the asserted combination by virtue of their dependence from claim 1, as well as their additional limitations. Claims 8 and 9 are patentably distinguishable from the asserted combination for reasons analogous to claim 1.

With respect to the rejection of claim 5 over the combination of Ayyadurai and Kennedy, it is noted that claim 5 depends from claim 1. Like Ayyadurai, Kennedy also fails to disclose or suggest "automatically determining a set of candidate reply transaction documents associated with the inbound document and the particular trading partner that sent

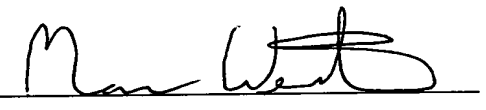
the inbound document," as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, even if combinable, claim 5 is patentably distinguishable from the combination of Ayyadurai and Kennedy by virtue of their dependence from claim 1, as well as their additional recitations.

Conclusion

In view of the above, applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early notice of the same is respectfully solicited. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account No. 19-0741 for any such fees; and applicant hereby petitions for any needed extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Date: August 8, 2006

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